UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 19, 1968

Attorney General Ramsey Clark announced today that the FBI has identified James Earl Ray, an escapee from the Missouri State Penitentiary, as Eric Starvo Galt, against whom a Federal complaint was filed last Wednesday in connection with the fatal shooting of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Director J. Edgar Hoover said that a systematic and exhaustive search of latent fingerprints uncovered in the Dr. King case against the fingerprints of the over 53,000 persons for whom "Wanted Notices" have been posted in the files of the FBI's Identification Division led to the determination that Galt and Ray are identical.

Mr. Hoover said that Ray, who is 40 years of age, was reported missing from the Missouri State Penitentiary at Jefferson City, Missouri, on April 23, 1967. He had been received at that institution on March 17, 1960, to serve a 20-year sentence following conviction in St. Louis for armed robbery and for operating a motor vehicle without permission of the owner.

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In September, 1966, while serving this sentence, he was confined for a time in the maximum security ward at the State Hospital at Fulton, Missouri.

According to Mr. Hoover, Ray has a known arrest record dating back to 1949. Prior to the 1960 conviction for which he received the 20-year term, Ray had been convicted of burglary in Los Angeles, California, in 1949; armed robbery in Chicago, Illinois, in 1952; and forging ~~and cashing~~ United States Postal Money Orders in Missouri in 1955.

He has served terms in the Los Angeles County Jail in 1949; in State Prisons at Joliet and Pontiac, Illinois, in 1952-54; and in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1955-58.

Ray was an enlisted man in the United States Army from February, 1946, to December, 1948, at which time he was given a General Discharge due to ineptness and lack of adaptability for military service. While in the Army, he received a three-month sentence at hard labor for being drunk and breaking arrest.

Mr. Hoover said that during his criminal career, Ray has also used the names of James McBride, James Walton, W. C. Herron and James O'Conner. He is a white male; claims to have

been born March 10, 1928, in Illinois; is approximately 5 feet 10 inches tall and weighs about 163 to 174 pounds. He has blue eyes and brown hair. There is a small scar on the center of his forehead and a scar on the palm of his right hand.

Ray has claimed that he attended school through the 10th grade in Alton, Illinois. He has had the reputation of being a "drifter" since leaving school. His vocational experience includes working as a baker, laborer and color matcher.

In connection with his escape from the Missouri State Penitentiary, an FBI complaint was filed in Jefferson City, Missouri, on July 20, 1967, charging Ray with unlawfully fleeing from the State of Missouri to avoid confinement. He has been a Federal fugitive since then.

Ray should be considered armed and extremely dangerous. Anyone having information concerning him should immediately contact FBI Headquarters in Washington, D. C., or the nearest FBI office.